**IT Applications Unit 3, AOS 1, Online Communities**

Complete the following, from Chapter 2, Online Communities, pgs, 44 –

1. Define an online community?

An online community is an online space where groups of people can share messages and ideas.

**Types of online communities:**

**Social networks and communities**

1. Describe the nature of a social networking site.

A social networking site encourages its members to share interests, stories, thoughts, photos and videos with other members of the site,

1. List e.g. of these sites.

Some examples of social networking sites are:

* Facebook
* Twitter
* Google+

1. What is the primary purpose of social networking sites.

The primary purpose of social networking sites is to allow socialising of members using the internet.

1. Is there governance over these sites and do they add “new” content to the internet?

There is not any real governance over what can be posted on online communities; the content added to the internet by social networking sites doesn’t add any real knowledge to the internet.

**Personal Profile Sites**

1. Describe the nature of personal profile sites.

A personal profile site is a site that allows users to create a profile page which includes information, photos and videos.

1. As a social networking tool what does Facebook enable users to do?

Facebook enables users to create their own profile, allows users to show their status, work together on events and to share links to other websites that they have an interest in.

1. What type of tool is twitter?

Twitter is a micro-blogging tool (it allows users to say what they are doing in 140 characters or less).

1. What have been the strengths & weaknesses of twitter?

The main strength of twitter is that users fan get information out quickly (helpful in situations such as natural disasters or major events), the main weakness of twitter is that there is no moderation.

1. What do social networking tools, such as Flicker and YouTube allow users to do?

Social networking sites such as Flicker and YouTube allow users to upload, share and view various types of media content like photos and videos.

**Issue:**

1. How do social networking sites pose a legal and ethical minefield for employers?

Social networking sites provide an ethical and legal minefield for employers because of the blurred line between social and professional life. This main issue arises when employers use these sites to check out what kind of people they will be employing (e.g. well behaved and responsible versus misbehaving and irresponsible) and base their judgment of potential employees on this.

**Professional or work-based communities, p 49**

1. Describe the characteristics of professional or work-based communities.

Work-based communities generally have a very clear agreement; the websites, mailing lists and discussion areas are set up with a clear purpose and there are often rules about the way in which information can be shared. These communities are normally set up in the name of learning and often have separate areas for ‘chit chat’ away from serious discussion pages.

1. How does membership differ in these communities to social networking sites?

Work-based communities are closed, meaning that those who want to access the community have to have a membership or undergo a verification process to ensure that their membership is authentic.

1. How does the content differ from social networking sites?

Work-based communities unlike many other online communities have professional discussions and offer content that is intended for learning purposes. Also in a work-based community users will not normally hide behind and avatar (they are truthful about who they are and what they do).

**Project and interest based communities**

1. List the characteristics of these communities.

Project based communities are causal in the way they go about exchanging information and ideas. They are often created by enthusiastic people and funded and managed by volunteers. These communities are generally open to the public, have free membership and encourage the exchange of files.

1. List an eg. of an interest based community.

An example of an internet based community the Morris Minor Car Club of Victoria, this club has existed a long time and used to s magazine and meeting to broadcast things to its members, but recently they developed a website to do this instead

1. Visit the project based community, <http://handmadehelpsout.blogspot.com/> as an eg. of one of these sites.

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